

NEWS OF THE SWIRLED!

UK Crop Circles of 1999

*This season's
round-up of crop
circles continues to
amaze, with
unusual geometric
shapes and
variations on
familiar themes.*

Introduction
by Andy Thomas © 1999

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Each crop circle season in England, enthusiasts wonder how the phenomenon can possibly better what has gone before, yet 1999, like every year, sprang astonishing new surprises in addition to developments on familiar themes. The quality of the designs displayed a dynamism bordering on audacity.

The pictogram which arrived on 3 April at Over Wallop, Hampshire, marked a record early appearance and was soon followed by a scattering of other designs over several counties. One emerging theme was a number of "eclipse" motifs, perhaps foreshadowing the forthcoming August event, most notably at nearby Middle Wallop on 3 May, each phase of a total solar eclipse depicted in a linear sequence.

Of May's Wiltshire formations, a strange biological-looking symbol at Avebury Trusloe intrigued many, while religious symbolism impacted with the arrival of a clear Jewish Menorah, the sacred candelabrum, at Barbury Castle on 31 May. There has been much speculation as to its context as a crop formation.

In June, circle "Mecca" Alton Barnes was hit with the longest pattern of the year: a chain of older pictogram shapes from the early 1990s, spanning over 1,000 feet! A "serpent" design lay nearby. The field had been watched by "croppies" until 2.30 am, yet the formation was found at first light—not much time for the alleged hoaxers (whom the media continually promote) in which to work.

The most prominent of the now traditional summer debunkings was initiated by the *Daily Mail* newspaper, claiming a triangular emblem of 33 standing circles at Avebury as a hoax it commissioned. The lack of evidence and contradictory prose left many unconvinced, but even if the design was man-made it explained only one out of thousands which have appeared in far more mysterious circumstances. More positive media interest followed the announcement that Laurance Rockefeller is funding a number of crop circle research projects.

Oblivious to this, the formations continued to amaze with a series of breathtaking glyphs, playing not just with circles but also hexagons, squares and representations of 3D-cubes, amongst other geometrical lessons. A record was broken on 16 July at Windmill Hill, Wiltshire, when a square containing 288 small circles appeared—the most ever found in one pattern. On 6 August, an amazing star of standing rings at Roundway, Wiltshire, was distinguished by a unique woven chequerboard lay—the first of its kind. It existed for just a few hours before being harvested.

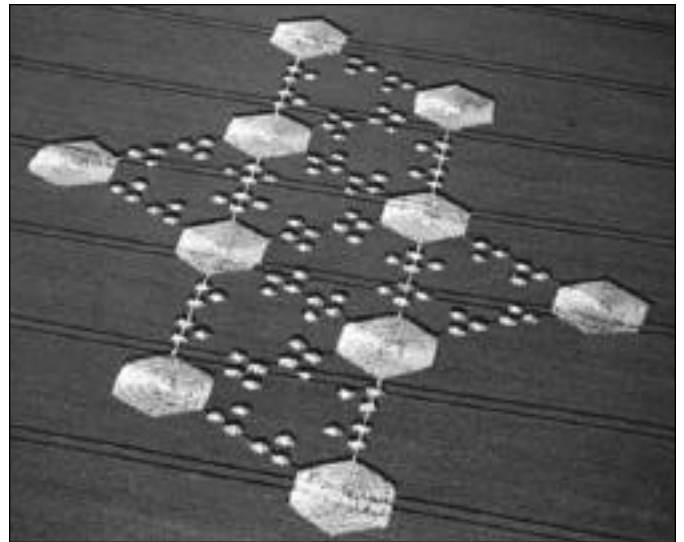
Around 130 English crop formations were reported during the summer. Curiously, from the total solar eclipse which touched the British Isles on 11 August, things quietened down, leaving some awaiting a grand finale to close the season at the time of writing. Even without one, those drawn to this most beautiful of mysteries, the source of which remains elusive, could hardly complain after such a season.

— Andy Thomas, 24 August 1999

Editor's Note: Andy Thomas is editor of the bimonthly crop circle journal, *SC*, a founding member of the Southern Circular Research team, and the author of three books exploring aspects of the circles: *Fields of Mystery*, *Quest for Contact* (with Paul Burra), and *Vital Signs*—which has been described by many as the definitive guide to the phenomenon. Andy regularly writes and lectures, and has made numerous TV and radio appearances.



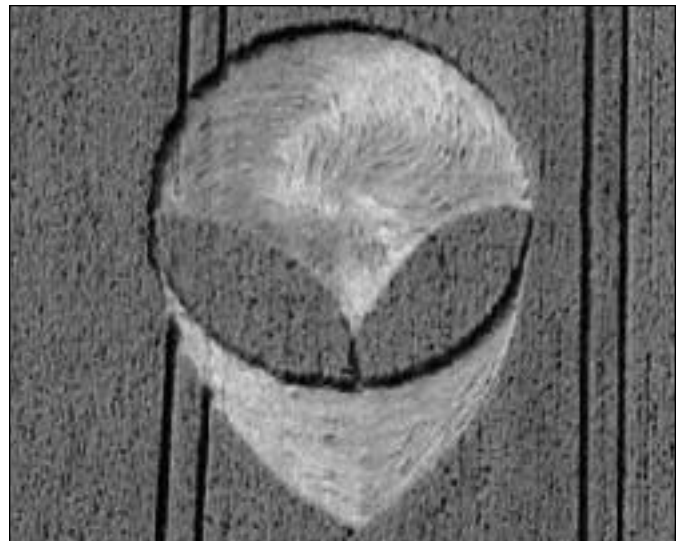
Allington, near Devizes, Wiltshire. Reported 24th June.
Image by Steve Alexander © 1999.



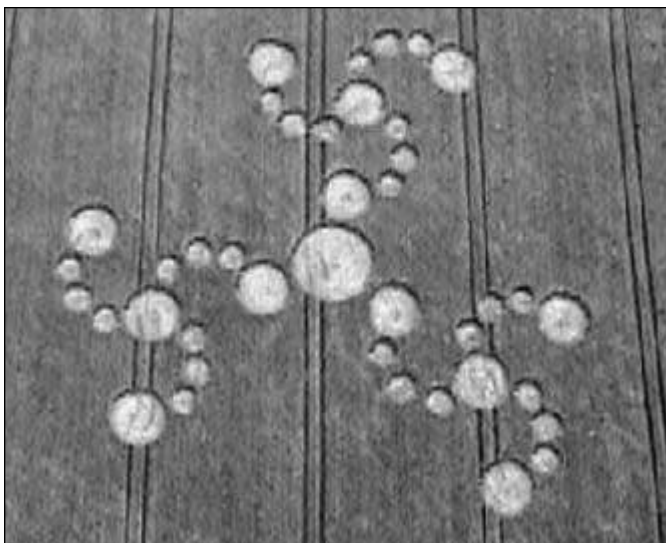
West Overton, near Avebury, Wiltshire. Reported 24th June.
Image by Steve Alexander © 1999.



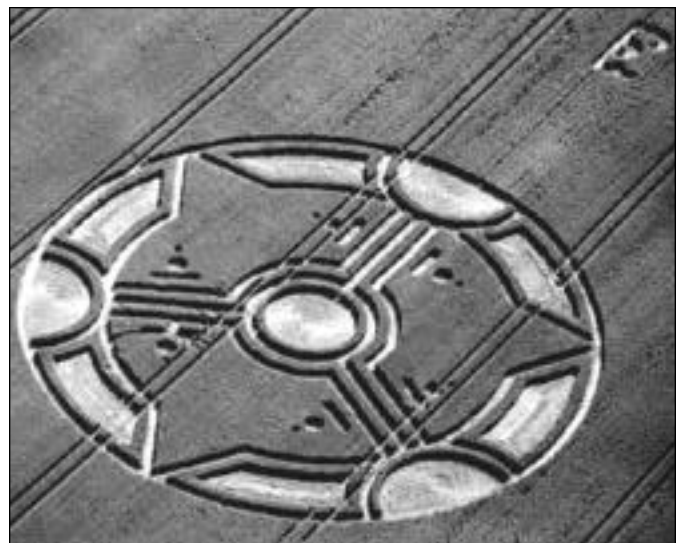
Allington Down, near Devizes, Wiltshire. Reported 26th June.
Video by M. J. Fussell © 1999. Circle in centre is 32 feet across.



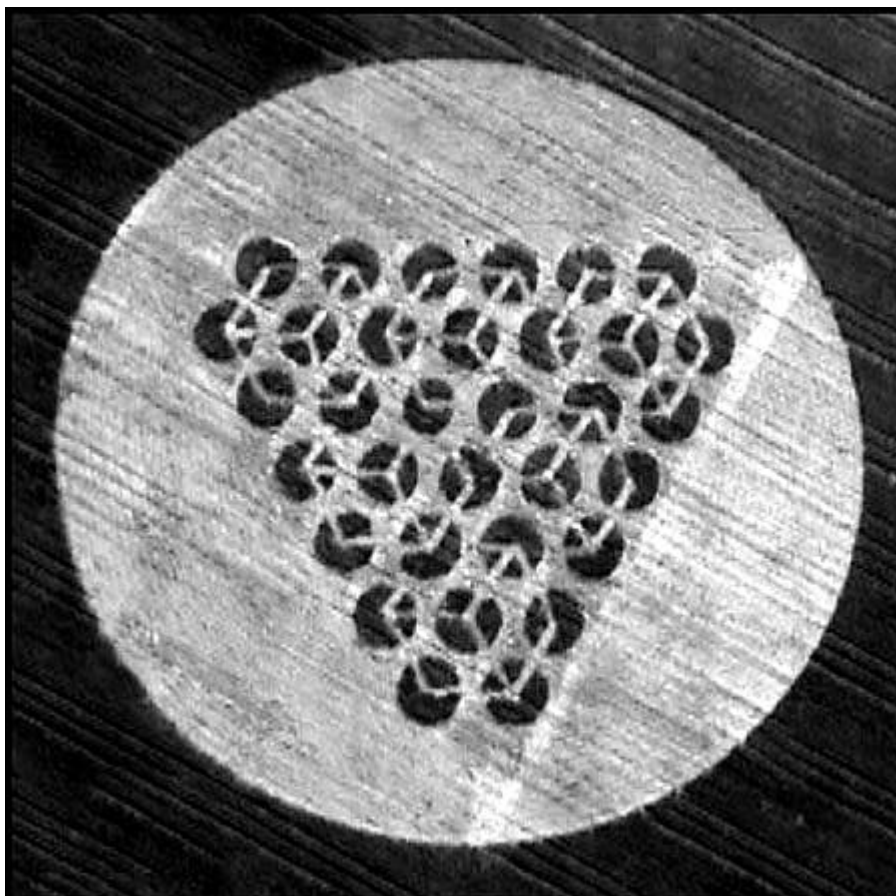
Bishop Cannings, near Devizes, Wiltshire. Reported 22nd August.
Image by Peter Sorensen © 1999. About 50 feet in width.



East Kennett, near Avebury, Wiltshire. Reported 21st July.
Video by Peter Sorensen © 1999. Circle in centre is 32 feet across.



Liddington Castle, near Swindon, Wiltshire. Reported 21st July.
Image by Steve Alexander © 1999. Approx. 200 feet in diameter.



Avebury Avenue, near Avebury, Wiltshire. Reported 29th July. Image by Steve Alexander © 1999. Report by Stuart Dike from the Crop Circle Connector website at <<http://cropcircleconnector.com/1999/>>.

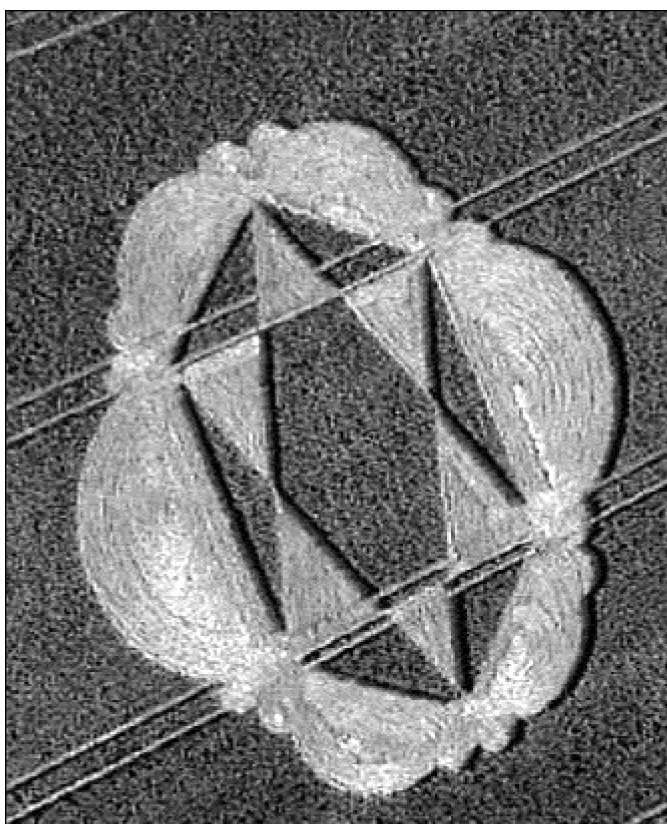
"THE NIGHT THE *DAILY MAIL* DIDN'T UNDERSTAND"...?

On 29 July, a huge design appeared opposite the standing-stone circle of Avebury, and shrouded the crop circle phenomenon in controversy once again.

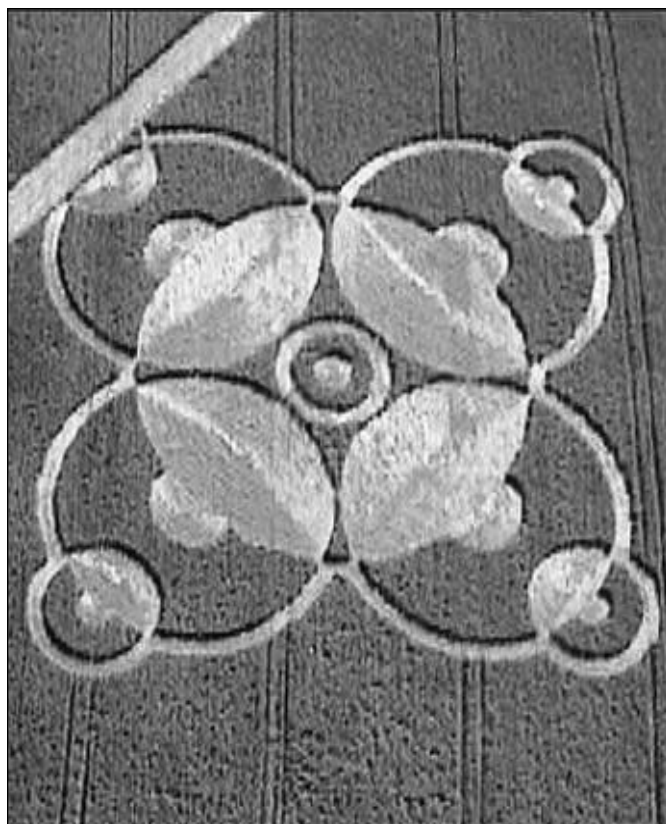
This latest design was reportedly part of a huge experiment at the hands of the national newspaper, the *Daily Mail*.

The newspaper's aim was to prove that a team of well-organised artists could go out in the dead of night and create a large, convincing formation—which, according to their article, would prove that people could be fooled into believing crop circles to be genuine.

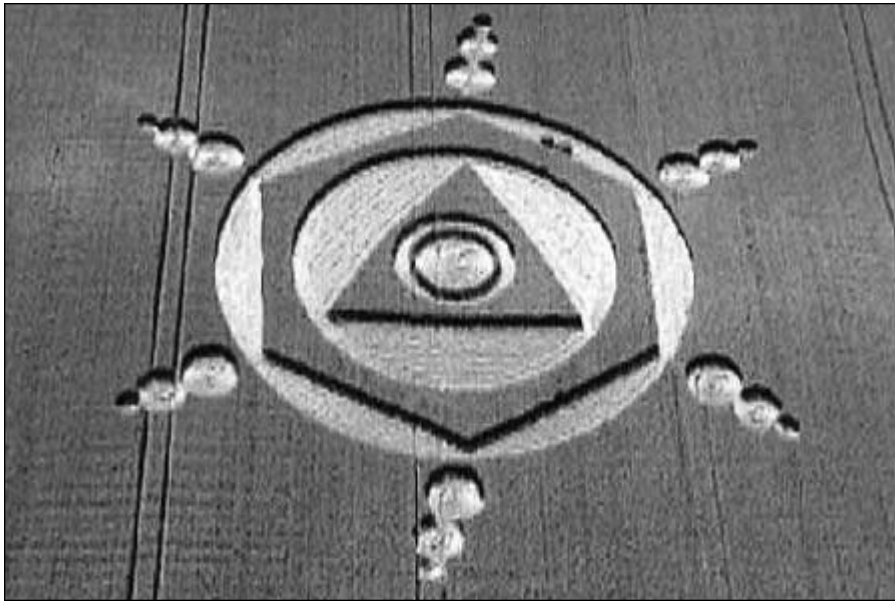
The article within the *Daily Mail* was titled, "The night the UFOs didn't land", but perhaps it should have have read, "The night the *Daily Mail* didn't understand"!



Upavon, near Pewsey, Wiltshire. Reported 22nd August. Video by Peter Sorensen © 1999.

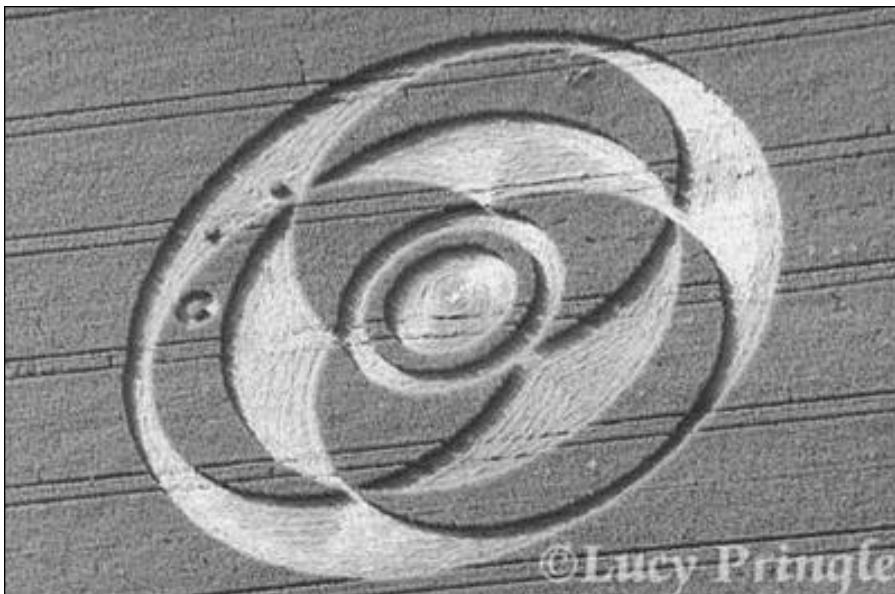


Gipsy Lane, near Cheesefoot Head, Hampshire. Reported 1st August. Video by Peter Sorensen © 1999.



LEFT: Henwood, near East Meon, Hampshire. Reported 3rd August. Video shot by Peter Sorensen © 1999. Discovered from the air by Nippon TV and Peter Sorensen.

LEFT MIDDLE: Meonstoke, near Horndean, Hampshire. Reported 23rd July. Image by Lucy Pringle © 1999.



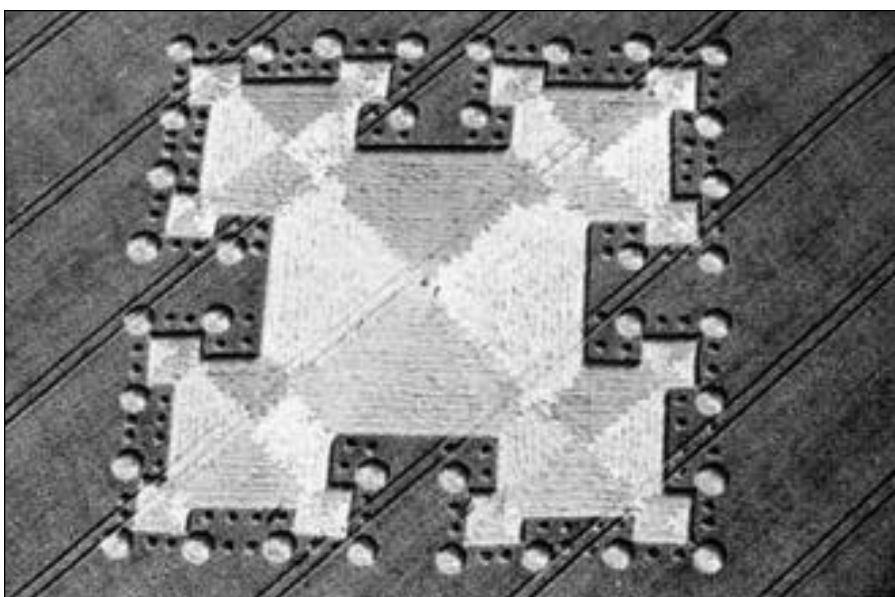
ABOVE: Barbury Castle, near Chiseldon, Wiltshire. Reported 5th August. Image by Steve Alexander © 1999.

LEFT: West Kennett Longbarrow, near Avebury, Wiltshire. Reported 4th August. Image by Steve Alexander © 1999.

Formation discovered by Ulrich Kox. FIELD REPORT by Stuart Dike:

This formation was located in quite a remote part of the Avebury landscape, positioned about a couple of hundred yards out the back of West Kennett Long Barrow. It is another fine addition to the Koch designs witnessed over the last three years. Indeed, the square geometry has been a main feature of the formations of 1999.

Five main squares are involved in the construction of this design, with the hidden squares creating the outer edge of the pattern. The circles placed on the perimeter are well formed, but visiting a formation at this stage in the season seems to create a messy floor construction—the plants not quite as supple as they would be earlier on in the season.



RIGHT, TOP: Beckhampton, near Avebury, Wiltshire. Reported 28th July.

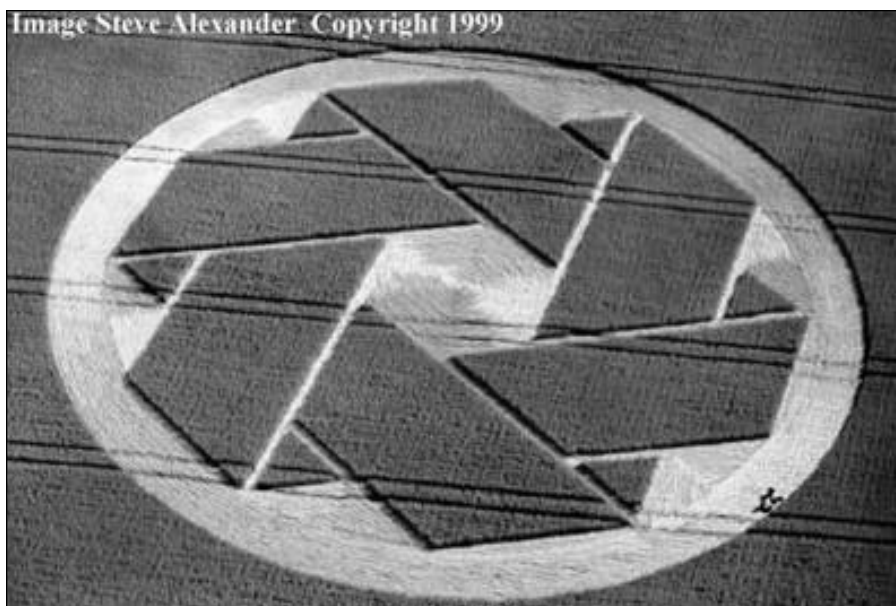
Image by Steve Alexander © 1999.

FIELD REPORT by Stuart Dike:

This marvellous formation is located on the flat field between Silbury Hill and Knoll Down. As we entered the formation, we noticed that the floor construction was extremely neat, with the classic quarter-sectioning of crop inside each of the triangular inserts on the outer edge of the inner design. It took us a while to work out the exact shape of the design, which is a classic Celtic Knot, a recognised Celtic symbol.

The execution and accuracy of the formation is quite breathtaking. The outer ring surrounding the knot has a width of around 19.8 feet (6 metres), and the design is approx. 240–250 ft (73–76 m) in diameter, with the central section of crop displaying an anticlockwise rotation. The outer perimeter ring has a clockwise rotation.

Image Steve Alexander. Copyright 1999



RIGHT, MIDDLE: Barbury Castle, near Chiseldon, Wiltshire. Reported 23rd July.

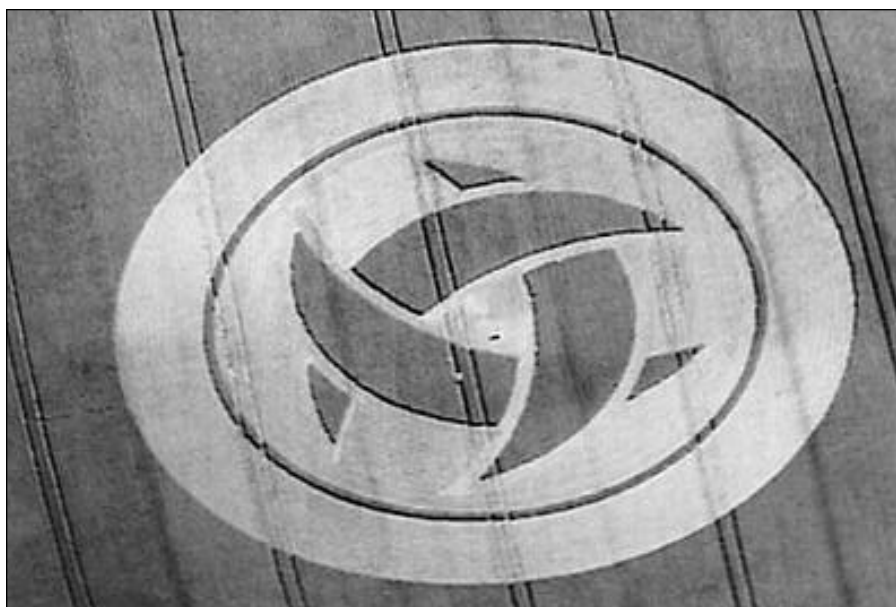
Image by Steve Alexander © 1999.

FIELD REPORT by Stuart Dike:

This wonderful formation, situated on the western side of Barbury Castle, is positioned in one of the most picturesque places I have had the pleasure to visit. It was quite breathtaking to view the formation from the top of Barbury Castle, a Neolithic hill fort and one of the best rampart forts you will visit in Wiltshire.

The formation itself spanned across six tramlines, which makes its diameter to be around 300 feet (91 metres). The design is made of a huge circle, with an inner ring of only about two feet in thickness, with a wonderful pattern of three interlocking crescents placed in the centre.

Overall, the floor construction is one of the best examples seen in the Avebury area. A truly outstanding formation!



RIGHT, BELOW: Wimpole Hall, near Great Eversdon, Cambridgeshire. Reported 23rd July.

Image by Russell Stannard © 1999.

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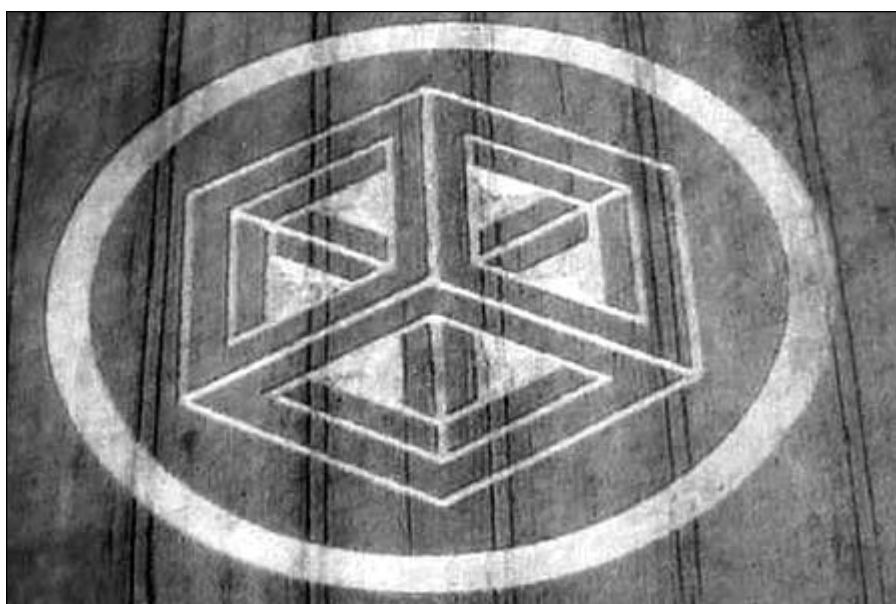
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• **CROP CIRCLE CONNECTOR WEBSITE**

<http://cropcircleconnector.com>





Cherhill, near Calne, Wiltshire. Reported 17th July.

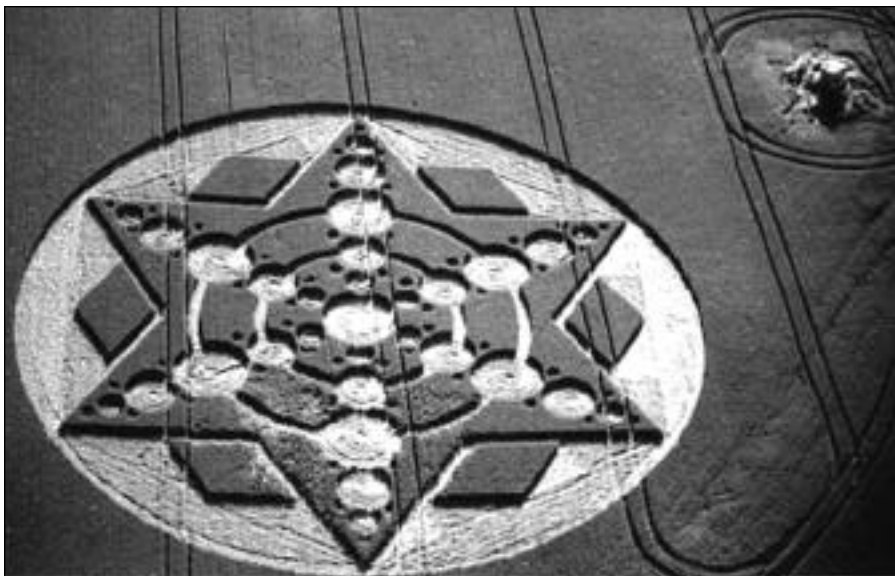
Image by Steve Alexander © 1999.

FIELD REPORT by Stuart Dike:

Located directly below the famous White Horse of Oldbury Camp, or more commonly named Cherhill Hill Fort, its appearance came within a flurry of reports that hit the area between 15th and 17th July.

The floor constructions on this year's formations have been extremely impressive, and Cherhill is no exception. The pattern around the triangular sections on the outside of the vortex flowed in two directions between each interlocking triangle.

This is a feature seen on many designs over the years, but the Cherhill formation incorporates a separate pattern positioned just off the main design. This is not the first time this shape has appeared; it was first seen on the Silverstone formation in Derbyshire back in 1998.



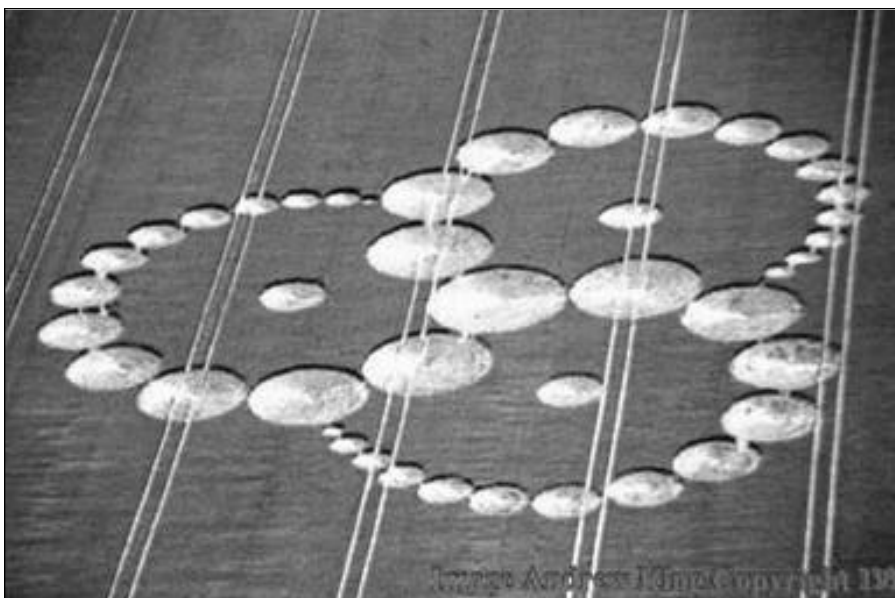
Devil's Den, near Clatford, Wiltshire. Reported 20th July.

Image by Steve Alexander ©1999.

FIELD REPORT by Stuart Dike:

This formation is situated approx. 100 feet (30 metres) from an ancient dolman (top right), a wonderful set of three stones with a top lintel. On entering the crop formation, we noticed the floor construction was simply beautiful. There were some wonderful, small, 2-3 ft channels running around the outer perimeter crop. On inspecting the many circles inside the formation, I noticed that all of them were running in a clockwise rotation; but on closer inspection it seemed that the smaller outer circles running down each diminishing arm were not quite circular in form.

The very night this design formed, a power failure was experienced by local residences between 11 pm and 1 am.



Trottiscliffe, near Maidstone, Kent. Reported 20th June.

Image by Andrew King © 1999.

FIELD REPORT by Andrew King and Joyce Galley (CCCS):

This formation consists of 43 circles, all clockwise, in three arcs of 12 with diminishing diameters, centred on three sets of circles, each with one central circle. Some of the circles' centres were offset from geometric centre and, clearly, the centres had all been much more heavily impressed than the outer parts. Some standing centres were noted, but since the formation was some 10 days old before we visited it, and had had a number of visitors, it was difficult to comment on how the original lay had been in the centres of most of the circles.

Another Kent formation had three large circles/ovals with arcs overlapping at a central point where they all thicken. Diameters approx. 250 and 600 feet respectively.